

# CAN THIS GO IN THE COMPOST?

## DECIPHERING PRODUCT LABELS



### 1. CONTACT YOUR SERVICE PROVIDER

Reach out to your organics service provider for clarification on what items they can and cannot accept. Try to have specific items or packaging in mind that your business or organization uses frequently. Many providers have resources and tips on their website or social media accounts.

### 2. KNOW THE DIFFERENCE

Compostable and biodegradable are not the same thing. Biodegradable generally means that the product will break down into smaller pieces. However, this sometimes can take decades to occur and can leave behind toxins and residue. Compostable items break down into non-toxic components that provide nutrients to the soil.



### 3. CHECK THE LABEL

Check product labels to see if the items match the information provided by your service provider. Biodegradable labels can be misleading, and not all compostable labeled items can be accepted by all facilities. Check for additional information like "compostable in commercial facilities." If there is no label or you have any doubt, throw it out.



### 4. SORT PROPERLY

After determining which labels your service provider accepts, properly sort your items so that no contamination occurs. Accidentally placing non-organic materials in your organics bin can negatively impact the quality of compost and leave potentially harmful chemicals behind.



### 5. REPEAT

Product materials, packaging, and labels are constantly changing and improving. Be sure to check back with your service provider if any new items are in question. Refresh yourself with the latest packaging material options and consider adjusting company purchases to approved compostable or biodegradable materials.